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Page 8



Page 9

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Page 10

Striking deals to end campus protests, some colleges invite discussion of their investments

By KATHLEEN FOODY, MIKE CATALINI, KAREN MATTHEWS and MICHAEL HILL
Associated Press
NEW YORK (AP) — Anti-war demonstrations ceased this week at a small number of U.S. universities after school leaders struck deals with pro-Palestinian protesters, fending off possible disruptions of final exams and graduation ceremonies.
The agreements at schools including Brown, Northwestern and Rutgers stand out amidst the chaotic scenes and 2,400-plus arrests on 46 campuses across the nation since April 17. Tent encampments and building takeovers have disrupted classes at some schools, including Columbia and UCLA.
Deals included commitments by universities to review their investments in Israel or hear calls to stop doing business with the longtime U.S. ally. Many protester demands have zeroed in on links to the Israeli military as the war grinds on in Gaza.



A group of pro-Palestinian protesters try to block a van carrying people detained by Portland police on Thursday, May 2, 2024, in Portland, Ore.

Continued on page 2

Associated Press

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Striking deals to end campus protests, some colleges invite discussion of their investments

Continued from Front

The agreements to even discuss divestment mark a major step on an issue that has been controversial for years, with opponents of a long-running campaign to boycott Israel saying it veers into antisemitism. But while the colleges have made concessions around amnesty for protesters and funding for Middle Eastern studies, they have made no promises about changing their investments.

"I think for some universities, it might be just a delaying tactic to diffuse the protests," said Ralph Young, a history professor who studies American dissent at Temple University in Philadelphia. "The end of the semester is happening now. And maybe by the time the next semester begins, there is a ceasefire in Gaza."

Some university boards may never even vote on divesting from Israel, which can be a complicated process, Young said. And some state schools have said they lack the authority to do so.

But Young said dialogue is a better tactic than arrests, which can inflame protesters.

Talking "at least gives the protesters the feeling that they're getting somewhere," he said. "Whether they are getting somewhere or not is another question."

Israel has branded the protests antisemitic, while Israel's critics say it uses those allegations to silence opposition. Although some protesters were caught on camera making antisemitic remarks or violent threats, protest organizers — some of whom are Jewish — have called it a peaceful movement to defend Palestinian rights and protest the war.

The University of Minnesota reopened Thursday after administrators said they reached an agreement to end an encampment in the heart of the Minneapolis campus.



Gabby Lasry, VP of Bruins for Israel, comments on UCLA campus antisemitism at the UCLA Hillel in Los Angeles on Friday, May 3, 2024.

Interim President Jeff Ettinger said demonstrators agreed not to disrupt final exams or commencements. In return, student organizations can address the university's board at a meeting next week, where protesters are expected to demand divestment from Israel.

"While there is more work to do, and conversations are still planned with other student groups affected by the painful situation in Palestine, I am heartened by today's progress," Ettinger said in a statement.

Demonstrators at Rutgers University — where finals were paused due to the protests on its New Brunswick campus — similarly packed up their tents Thursday afternoon. The state university agreed to establish an Arab Cultural Center and to not retaliate against any students involved in the protest camp.

In a statement, Chancellor Francine Conway noted protesters' request for divestment from companies doing business with Israel and for Rutgers to cut ties with Tel Aviv University. She said the request is under review, but "such decisions fall outside of our ad-

ministrative scope."

Protesters at Brown University in Rhode Island agreed to dismantle their pro-Palestinian encampment Tuesday. School officials said students could present arguments to divest Brown's endowment from companies contributing to and profiting from the war in Gaza.

In addition, Brown President Christina Paxson will ask an advisory committee to make a recommendation on divestment by Sept. 30, which will be put before the school's governing corporation for a vote in October.

Northwestern's Deering Meadow in suburban Chicago also fell silent after an agreement Monday. The deal curbed protest activity in return for the reestablishment of an advisory committee on university investments and other commitments.

The arrangement drew dissent from both sides. Some pro-Palestinian protesters condemned it as a failure to stick to their original demands, while some supporters of Israel said it represented "cowardly" capitulation.

Seven of 18 members sub-

sequently resigned from a university committee that advises the administration on addressing antisemitism, Islamophobia and expressions of hatred on campus, saying they couldn't continue to serve "with antisemitism so present at Northwestern in public view for the past week."

Michael Simon, the executive director of an organization for Jewish students, Northwestern Hillel, said he resigned after concluding the committee could not achieve its goals.

Faculty at Pomona College in California voted in favor of the school divesting from companies they said are funding Israel's war in Gaza, a group of faculty and students said Friday.

The vote Thursday is not binding on the liberal arts school of nearly 1,800 students east of Los Angeles. But supporters said they hope it would encourage the board to stop investing in these companies and start disclosing where it makes its investments.

"This nonbinding faculty statement does not represent any official position of Pomona College," the school said in a statement Friday. "We will continue

to encourage further dialogue within in our community, including consideration of counterarguments."

Meanwhile, arrests of demonstrators continued elsewhere.

About a dozen protesters who refused police orders to leave a tent encampment at New York University were arrested early Friday, and about 30 more left voluntarily, according to NYU spokesperson John Beckman. The school asked the New York Police Department to intervene, Beckman said.

NYPD officers also cleared an encampment at The New School in Greenwich Village on the request of school administrators. No arrests were announced.

Authorities said a further 132 protesters were arrested when police broke up a pro-Palestinian encampment at the State University of New York at New Paltz starting late Thursday. And nine protesters were arrested at the University of Tennessee, including seven students who Chancellor Donde Plowman said would also be sanctioned under the school's code of conduct.

The student protest movement began April 17 at Columbia University, where student protesters built an encampment to call for an end to the Israel-Hamas war. More than 34,000 Palestinians have been killed in the conflict in the Gaza Strip, according to the Health Ministry there. Israel launched its offensive in Gaza after Oct. 7, when Hamas militants killed about 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and took roughly 250 hostages in an attack on southern Israel.

More than 100 people were arrested late Tuesday when police broke up the Columbia encampment. One officer accidentally discharged his gun inside Hamilton Hall during that operation, but no one was injured, NYPD said late Thursday. □

Associated Press

U.S. loosens some electric vehicle battery rules, potentially making more EVs eligible for tax credits

By TOM KRISHER and MATTHEW DALY

Associated Press

DETROIT (AP) — The U.S. government on Friday loosened some rules governing electric vehicle tax credits, potentially making more EVs eligible for credits of up to \$7,500 but leading critics to accuse the Biden administration of helping China.

The Treasury Department announced final regulations for the credits under the 2022 Inflation Reduction Act, giving automakers more time to comply with some provisions about where battery minerals can come from.

The credits range from \$3,750 to \$7,500 for new EVs. There's also a \$4,000 credit for used ones.

They're aimed at juicing demand for EVs in an effort to reach a Biden administration goal that half of all new vehicle sales be electric by 2030. This year the credits are available at the time a vehicle is purchased from an authorized dealer rather than waiting for an income tax refund.

Qualifying for the credits depends on a person's income, the price of the vehicles and requirements related to battery make-up and minerals that get



A 2023 Ford Mustang Mach-E charges, Friday, March 8, 2024, at an electric vehicle charging station in London, Ohio.

Associated Press

tougher each year. To get the credits, EVs must be assembled in North America. Some plug-in hybrids also can qualify.

Starting this year, complex rules are being phased in to promote development of a domestic electric vehicle supply chain. The rules would limit EV buyers from claiming the full tax credit if they purchase cars containing battery materials from China and other nations "of concern" that are considered hostile to the United States. Those include Russia, North Korea and Iran.

Under the final rule, however, small amounts of graphite and other minerals used in batteries would be ex-

empt from the restriction until 2027, because their country of origin is nearly impossible to trace, officials said. Without the exemption, some vehicles that met nearly all of the requirements could get knocked out of tax credit eligibility due to tiny amounts that couldn't be traced, Treasury said.

The National Mining Association slammed the new exemptions as a giveaway to China.

"Congress created these tax incentives to secure our supply chains and generate American jobs while supporting EV adoption. They did not intend for loopholes to be created that essentially amount to

a blank check from the American taxpayer to China," said Rich Nolan, the mining lobby's president and CEO.

West Virginia Sen. Joe Manchin, the Democratic chairman of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, said that through the new rule, the Biden administration "is effectively endorsing 'made in China.'"

Manchin, who played a key role in passage of the Inflation Reduction Act, President Joe Biden's landmark climate law, said the law specifically prohibits EVs that contain materials from foreign adversaries such as China and Russia from being eligible for the tax credit after 2024. "But now Treasury has provided a long-term pathway for these countries to remain in our supply chains. It's outrageous and illegal," he said. This year half of the critical minerals in an EV's battery have to be mined or processed in the U.S., or a country with which it has a free trade agreement. Sixty percent of the battery parts have to be made or assembled in North America.

Starting in 2025, batteries with any critical minerals from nations of concern

would not be eligible for any tax credits. But after getting comment from the auto industry and others, treasury officials decided to loosen that restriction.

The rule issued Friday is likely to make more EVs eligible for credits in 2025 and 2026, but the auto industry says that's difficult to tell until automakers finish tracing the origin of all the minerals.

"The EV transition requires nothing short of a complete transformation of the U.S. industrial base," John Bozell, CEO of the Alliance for Automotive Innovation, a large industry trade group, said in a statement. "That's a monumental task that won't — and can't — happen overnight."

The rule change, he said, "makes good sense for investment, job creation and consumer EV adoption."

At present, China dominates crucial parts of EV battery supply and production, even as automakers race to establish key mineral and components efforts elsewhere.

Of 114 EV models currently sold in the U.S., only 13 qualify for the full \$7,500 credit, the automotive alliance said. □

Justice Department warns it plans to sue Iowa over new state immigration law

By HANNAH FINGERHUT

Associated Press

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — The U.S. Department of Justice has told Iowa's top officials it plans to sue the state over a new law making it a crime for a person to be in Iowa if they've previously been denied admission to the U.S.

The statute interferes with the federal government's authority to enforce immigration law, according to the DOJ, which already sued Texas to block a similar measure.

The DOJ informed Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds and state Attorney General Brenna Bird that it intends

to sue unless the state agrees by May 7 not to enforce the law, according to a letter sent Thursday and first reported on by the Des Moines Register.

Bird indicated Friday that the state is unlikely to agree to the federal terms.

"Iowa will not back down and stand by as our state's safety hangs in the balance," she said in a statement.

The similar Texas law is on hold due to the Justice Department's court challenge. Legal experts and some law enforcement officials have said the Iowa law poses the same questions raised in the Texas



A woman listens to a speaker during an Iowa Movement for Migrant Justice rally and march, Wednesday, May 1, 2024, in Des Moines, Iowa.

Associated Press

case because enforcing immigration law has historically fallen to federal au-

thorities. The Iowa law violates the U.S. Constitution because

it "effectively creates a separate state immigration scheme," the Justice Department said in its letter.

The law, which goes into effect on July 1, would allow criminal charges to be brought against people who have outstanding deportation orders or who previously have been removed from or denied admission to the U.S. Once in custody, migrants could either agree to a judge's order to leave the U.S. or be prosecuted.

The law has elevated anxiety in Iowa's immigrant communities, leading to protests in Des Moines and other cities Wednesday. □

Biden administration says 100,000 new migrants are expected to enroll in 'Obamacare' next year

By AMANDA SEITZ

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) —

Roughly 100,000 immigrants who were brought to the U.S. as children are expected to enroll in the Affordable Care Act's health insurance next year under a directive the Biden administration released Friday.

The move took longer than promised to finalize and fell short of Democratic President Joe Biden's initial proposal to allow those migrants to sign up for Medicaid, the health insurance program that provides nearly free coverage for the nation's poorest people.

But it will allow thousands of people, known as "Dreamers," to access tax breaks when they sign up for coverage after the Affordable Care Act's marketplace enrollment opens Nov. 1, just days ahead of the presidential election.

"I'm proud of the contributions of Dreamers to our country and committed to providing Dreamers the support they need to succeed," Biden said in a statement Friday.

While it may help Biden



An insurance agent talks with clients inside the main location of Las Madras de los Seguros, Spanish for "The Godmothers of Insurance," at a shopping center in Miami, on Dec. 5, 2023.

Associated Press

boost his appeal at a crucial time among Latinos, a crucial voting bloc that he needs to turn out to win the election, the move prompted criticism among conservatives about the president's border and migrant policies.

The action opens the marketplace to any participant in the Obama-era Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, or DACA, many of whom are Latino. Xavier Becerra, the nation's top health official, said Thursday that many of those migrants have

delayed getting care because they have not had coverage.

"They incur higher costs and debts when they do finally receive care," Becerra told reporters on a call. "Making Dreamers eligible to enroll in coverage will improve their health and well-being and strengthen the health and well-being of our nation and our economy."

The administration's action changes the definition of "lawfully present" so DACA participants can legally enroll in the marketplace ex-

change.

Then-President Barack Obama launched the DACA initiative to shield from deportation immigrants who were brought to the U.S. illegally by their parents as children and to allow them to work legally in the country. However, the "Dreamers" were still ineligible for government-subsidized health insurance programs because they did not meet the definition of having a "lawful presence" in the U.S.

The administration decided not to expand eligibility for Medicaid for those migrants after receiving more than 20,000 comments on the proposal, senior officials said Thursday. Those officials declined to explain why the rule, which was first proposed last April, took so long to finalize. The delay meant the migrants were unable to enroll in the marketplace for coverage this year.

At one point, there were as many as 800,000 people enrolled in DACA, though now that figure is roughly 580,000. The administration predicts only 100,000 will actually sign up because

some may get coverage through their workplaces or other ways. Some may also be unable to afford coverage through the marketplace.

Other classes of immigrants, including asylum seekers and people with temporary protected status, are already eligible to purchase insurance through the marketplaces of the ACA, Obama's 2010 health care law, often called "Obamacare."

The president last year also unveiled a regulation that was aimed at fending off legal challenges to DACA; former President Donald Trump moved to end the policy, and it has bounced back and forth in federal court. Last fall, a federal judge said the current version can continue at least temporarily.

"President Biden and I will continue to do everything in our power to protect DACA, but it is only a temporary solution," Vice President Kamala Harris said in a statement. "Congress must act to ensure Dreamers have the permanent protections they deserve." □

Three groups are suing New Jersey to block an offshore wind farm

By WAYNE PARRY

Associated Press

LONG BEACH TOWNSHIP, N.J. (AP) —

Three anti-wind power groups are suing New Jersey to overturn a key environmental approval for a wind energy farm planned off the coast of Long Beach Island.

Save Long Beach Island, Defend Brigantine Beach and Protect Our Coast NJ filed suit in appellate court on April 26 challenging a determination by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection that the Atlantic Shores wind farm project meets the requirements of a federal coastal protection law.

Atlantic Shores is one of three proposed wind farms off New Jersey's coast that have preliminary approval.

Bruce Afran, an attorney for the groups, said the state's "approval flies in the face of the federal regulator's environmental impact statement that says the Atlantic Shores project will damage marine habitat, compress and harden the seafloor, damage marine communities, compromise migration corridors for endangered species, and cause commercial fishing stocks to decline."

The same three groups challenged a wind farm proposed by the Danish wind energy company Orsted, which scrapped the project in October.

The lawsuit was the latest obstacle facing New Jersey's quest to become the East Coast leader in offshore wind. These three groups are among the



Land-based wind turbines spin in Atlantic City, N.J., on Nov. 3, 2023.

Associated Press

most vocal and litigious opponents of offshore wind projects.

The New Jersey attorney general's office declined comment on the pending litigation, and Atlantic Shores did not respond to a request for comment Friday.

But Joshua Henne, a political strategist advising

several groups fighting climate change, accused the anti-wind groups of acting in league with the fossil fuel industry.

"There ain't nothing grassroots about this effort," he said. "It's astroturf, seeded by the fossil fuel industry."

Robin Shaffer, president of Protect Our Coast, rejected

that claim.

"We have never taken one penny from any entity linked to the fossil fuel industry," he said. "Not one."

Up until a year ago, the group used the Caesar Rodney Institute to hold its money. The Delaware-based group is part of a group of think tanks supporting and funded by fossil fuel interests, according to the Energy and Policy Institute.

Caesar Rodney charged Protect Our Coast a 12% fee to hold its money, Shaffer said, adding his group currently has no relationship with the institute.

He also noted that one of the owners of Atlantic Shores is an affiliate of Shell, the global oil and gas company. □

German foreign minister says Russia will face consequences for monthslong cyber espionage

BRUSSELS (AP) — Germany on Friday accused Russian military agents of hacking the top echelons of Chancellor Olaf Scholz's party and other sensitive government and industrial targets, and was joined by NATO and fellow European countries in warning that Russia's cyberespionage would have consequences.

Relations between Russia and Germany were already tense, with Germany providing military support to Ukraine in its ongoing war with Russia.

German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock said Russian military cyber operators were behind the hacking of emails of the Social Democrats, the leading party in the governing coalition. Officials said they did so by exploiting Microsoft Outlook.

Officials described a hacking campaign that persisted for months.

The German Interior Ministry said in a statement that the hacking campaign began at least as early as March 2022 — a month after Russia's full-scale invasion of



Germany's Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock speaks in Adelaide, Friday, May 3, 2024, during a ceremony to mark the return of four significant cultural heritage items to the indigenous Kurna people from the collection of the Grassi Museum in Leipzig.

Associated Press

Ukraine — with emails at Social Democrat party headquarters accessed beginning that December. It said German companies, including in the defense and aerospace sectors, as well as targets related to the war were also a focus.

The statement said international efforts led by the FBI shut down in late January a botnet of compromised network devices used by the Russian hackers — known as APT28 or Fancy

Bear — in the cyberespionage scheme.

"Russian state hackers attacked Germany in cyberspace," Baerbock said at a news conference in the Australian city of Adelaide. She attributed the hack to a unit of Russia's GRU military intelligence unit.

"This is absolutely intolerable and unacceptable and will have consequences," she said, without specifying what they might be.

A separate German state-

ment said the hacking occurred over "a relatively long period" and also targeted various unidentified German government authorities, foundations and associations. It said the Social Democrats' executive committee was targeted.

The Council of the EU and the Czech Foreign Ministry said Czechia's institutions have also been targeted by the same group. Both German and Czech officials said the GRU hackers leveraged a previously unknown vulnerability in Microsoft Outlook.

In a statement by the EU's top diplomat, Josep Borrell, the bloc's nations said they "strongly condemn the malicious cyber campaign" by Fancy Bear "against Germany and Czechia."

The EU noted that it had previously imposed sanctions on individuals and entities associated with the group for targeting the German parliament in 2015. It said it will not tolerate the continuation of such attacks, particularly with EU elections upcoming in June.

NATO accused Fancy Bear of targeting "other national governmental entities, critical infrastructure operators and other entities across the Alliance," including in Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Sweden.

"We are determined to employ the necessary capabilities in order to deter, defend against and counter the full spectrum of cyberthreats to support each other, including by considering coordinated responses," said the North Atlantic Council, the principal political decision-making body within NATO.

Baerbock is visiting Australia, New Zealand and Fiji, with the trip focusing on security policy as China pushes for influence in the Pacific region.

"The defense cooperation between Germany and Australia is close and we would like to deepen it further and together expand it, because we are in a situation where we face similar threats," said Baerbock, who is the first German foreign minister to visit Australia in 13 years. □

M23 rebels seize key smartphone mineral mining town in eastern Congo

By **CHRISTINA MALKIA and MARK BANCHEREAU**

Associated Press

KINSHASA, Congo (AP) —

A rebel group with alleged links to Rwanda this week seized Rubaya, a mining town in eastern Congo known for producing a key mineral used in smartphones, the group said Thursday in a statement.

In a statement shared with The Associated Press, a spokesperson for the M23 rebel group said the town was "liberated."

The Congolese army declined to comment on the situation.

The decadeslong conflict in eastern Congo has produced one of the world's worst humanitarian crises, with over 100 armed groups fighting for control of the mineral-rich area near the

border with Rwanda. Many groups are accused of carrying out mass killings, rapes and other human rights violations. The violence has displaced about 7 million people, many beyond the reach of aid.

The town of Rubaya holds deposits of tantalum, which is extracted from coltan, a key component in the production of smartphones. It is among the minerals that was named earlier this month in a letter from Congo's government questioning Apple about the tech company's knowledge of "blood minerals" being smuggled in its supply chain.

"The fall of Rubaya is in a way the embodiment of this systemic plundering," Ernest Singoma, a civil society activist in Goma, told



M23 rebels stand with their weapons in Kibumba, in the eastern of Democratic Republic of Congo, Dec. 23, 2022.

Associated Press

the AP on Thursday.

There's been an upsurge in fighting in recent months between M23 rebels and Congo army forces, and it comes as the United Nations plans to withdraw peacekeepers from the region by the end of the year. John Banyene, a civil soci-

ety activist, told the AP that the rebels were advancing towards the town of Goma, which is eastern Congo's largest city and the capital of North Kivu province.

"All the supply routes to the city are blocked," said Banyene. "We are just getting by."

Congolese President Felix Tshisekedi alleges Rwanda is destabilizing Congo by backing the M23 rebels. U.N. experts, along with the U.S. State Department, have also accused Rwanda of backing the rebels. Rwanda denies the claims. Earlier this week, French President Emmanuel Macron called on neighboring Rwanda to halt its support for the M23 rebel group during a joint press conference with Tshisekedi in Paris.

Onesphore Sematumba, an analyst with the International Crisis Group, said the capture of Rubaya was a significant development in the conflict.

"Rubaya has mining deposits and without doubt this will allow M23 to exploit them," he told the AP. □

Southern Brazil has been hit by the worst floods in more than 80 years

By **GABRIELA SÁ PESSOA**

Associated Press

SAO PAULO (AP) — Heavy rains in the southern Brazilian state of Rio Grande do Sul killed 39 people, with another 68 still missing, the state civil defense agency said Friday, as record-breaking floods devastated cities and forced thousands to leave their homes. It was the fourth such environmental disaster in a year, following floods in July, September and November 2023 that killed 75 people in total.

The flooding statewide has surpassed that seen during a historic 1941 deluge, according to the Brazilian Geological Service. In some cities, water levels were at their highest since records began nearly 150 years ago, the agency said.

On Thursday, a dam at a hydroelectric plant between the cities of Bento Gonçalves and Cotipora partially collapsed and entire cities in the Taquari River valley, like Lajeado and Estrela, were completely overtaken by water. In the town of Feliz, 50 miles (80 kilometers) from the state capital, Porto



People evacuate a flooded area after heavy rain in Sao Sebastiao do Cai, Rio Grande do Sul state, Brazil, Thursday, May 2, 2024.

Associated Press

Alegre, a massively swollen river swept away a bridge that connected it with the neighboring city of Linha Nova.

Operators reported electricity, communications and water cuts across the state. More than 24,000 people had to leave their homes, according to the civil defense agency.

Without internet, telephone service or electricity, residents struggled to provide updates or information to their relatives living in other states. Helicopters flew continually over the cities while stranded families with children awaited rescue on the rooftops.

Isolete Neumann, 58, lives

in the city of Lajeado in the Taguai River valley and told The Associated Press has never before seen a scenario like the one she is now experiencing.

"People were making barricades in front of hospitals with sand and gravel. It felt like a horror movie," she said by phone. Some people in her region were so desperate, she added, that they threw themselves into the water currents.

Neumann's own neighborhood wasn't inundated, but has no running water and she hasn't showered since Tuesday. She said she's collecting rainwater in a basin to be able to cook. A clothing store she owns

in the city's central area is flooded, she added.

"I don't even know how it must be. There must be nothing left."

The downpour started Monday and is expected to last at least through Saturday, Marcelo Seluchi, chief meteorologist at the National Center for Monitoring and Alerts of Natural Disasters, told Brazil's public television network Friday.

On Thursday night, Gov. Eduardo Leite alerted the state's population — known as gauchos — about the persistence of rains and floods. The situation was expected to worsen in Porto Alegre, he said.

"As a human being, I am devastated inside, just like every gaucho is," he said. "But as governor, I am here steadfast and I guarantee that we will not falter. We are doing everything with focus, attention, discipline, and outrage, to ensure that everything within our reach is done."

President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva acknowledged the flood victims at a press conference on Friday alongside Japan's Prime Minister Fumio Kishida in Brasilia.

"The first words from Minister

Fumio Kishida in the meeting we held were of solidarity with the people of the state of Rio Grande do Sul, who are victims by one of the largest floods we have ever known. Never before in the history of Brazil had there been such a quantity of rain in one single location," Lula said.

Weather across South America is affected by the climate phenomenon El Niño, a periodic, naturally occurring event that warms surface waters in the Equatorial Pacific region. In Brazil, El Niño has historically caused droughts in the north and intense rainfall in the south.

This year, the impacts of El Niño have been particularly dramatic, with a historic drought in the Amazon. Scientists say extreme weather is happening more frequently due to human-caused climate change.

Karina Lima, a 36-year-old scientist and PhD candidate in climatology at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul, told The Associated Press that the state is located in a region with certain characteristics that amplify El Niño's destructive potential. □

Canadian police make 3 arrests in Sikh separatist's slaying that sparked a spat with India

By **ROB GILLIES and**

JIM MORRIS

Associated Press

VANCOUVER, British Columbia (AP) — Canadian police said they arrested three suspects Friday in the slaying of a Sikh separatist leader last June that became the center of a diplomatic spat with India, and are investigating possible ties between the detainees and the Indian government.

Three Indian nationals in their 20s identified as Kamalpreet Singh, Karan Brar and Karampreet Singh were arrested in Edmonton, Alberta on Friday morning in the slaying of 45-year-old Hardeep Singh Nijjar by masked gunmen outside Vancouver, police said.

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau sparked a diplomatic feud with India in September when he said that there were "credible allegations" of Indian involvement in the slaying of Nijjar.

India had accused Nijjar of links to terrorism, but angrily denied involvement in the slaying. In response to the allegations, India told Canada last year to remove 41 of its 62 diplomats in the country. Tensions remain but have somewhat eased since.

The three suspects had been living in Canada as non-permanent residents, Royal Canadian Mounted Police Superintendent Mandeep Mooker said Friday at a news conference



A banner that shows the late Sikh separatist leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar is displayed outside the Guru Nanak Sikh Gurdwara Sahib in Surrey, British Columbia, Sept. 18, 2023, where he was gunned down in his vehicle while leaving the temple parking lot.

Associated Press

in Toronto.

"We are investigating whether there are any ties to the government of India," Mooker said, adding that it was an "ongoing investigation."

Royal Canadian Mounted Police Assistant Commissioner David Teboul said Canadian authorities are speaking to counterparts in India. "I would characterize that collaboration as rather

challenging," he said. "It's been very difficult."

The three men were expected to be transported to British Columbia by Monday to face charges of first-degree murder and conspiracy to commit murder. Nijjar, an Indian-born citizen of Canada, was a plumber and also a leader in what remains of a once-strong movement to create an independent Sikh homeland, known as Khalistan. But he had denied allegations of ties to terrorism.

A bloody decadelong Sikh insurgency shook north India in the 1970s and 1980s, until it was crushed in a government crackdown in which thousands of people were killed, including prominent Sikh leaders. □

The legend of the Kibrahacha tree

(Oranjestad)—The Kibrahacha is a famous tree known locally for its bright, yellow flowers that blooms for just three days. Scientifically known as *Tabebuia billbergii*, and in English as the Yellow Poui, this tree is native to the Caribbean islands of Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao, and is considered among locals as one of the most spectacular trees on the island. But did you also know that the beautiful yellow flowers have a story behind them?



The Kibrahacha is said to have extremely hard wood—so hard that it can break an axe. In fact, that's what its name means in Papiamentu: "kibra" (break) "hacha" (axe). The flowers bloom around April and May, but this only last for about three days, as the flowers start to fall off and the tree starts growing its green leaves. The Kibrahacha is especially particular, as it's the only one among its neighboring trees to start blooming first.

The legend of the Kibrahacha
Written by Hubert (Lio Booi)

One day Aterima, who lived west of the hill Sero Warawara, woke up one day to find her father sleeping in his hammock, suffering a bout of terrible fever. Her mother was very worried, and as was the custom in the olden days, asked Aterima to go fetch Kudawecha, who was an epistemophile, to come see his father.

Aterima wasted time and went to go fetch Kudawecha. Upon telling Kudawecha that her father was sick, he immediately accompanied Aterima back to her hut, where he encountered her father in a bad state. Not willing to waste any time, he told Aterima that the only thing that can cure her father is a home-made potion made out of the Kibrahacha flower. At the time the Kibrahacha was not yet in her blooming season, but the stubborn Kudawecha was determined to bring back Aterima's father back to health, and so off they went to the nearest Kibrahacha tree.

When they arrived at the tree, they saw that it was covered head to toe in thorns, with only a few closed flowers at the very top. Kudawecha, experienced veteran in all things Aruban flora and fauna, told Aterima to start plucking the thorns of the tree to climb to the top where the flowers are. Aterima, just as determined to save her father, didn't hesitate to start.

To her surprise, every time she plucked a thorn of the tree, a bright, yellow flower bloomed in its place. The thorns were hard to pluck out, but Aterima continued plucking with enthusiasm and wonder at the unfolding sight before her. Not too long after she was able to fill her entire satchel with the yellow flowers. Kudawecha, satisfied to see Aterima so happy and encouraged to help her father, took her back to her hut.

Upon arriving back at the hut, Aterima's mother quickly made a tea out of the flowers and gave it to her sick husband. Miraculously, after just one sip of the tea, the father's fever left his body immediately, and he opened eyes and sprung up feeling new.

The next morning, they all visited the same Kibrahacha tree that saved the life of Aterima's father and they saw another miracle. The tree was covered again in the same bright, yellow flowers, with not a thorn in sight. And as the legend goes, from that day on, the Kibrahacha tree no longer produced any more thorns. □

Aruba Tourism Authority honored loyal visitor at Renaissance Wind Creek Aruba Resort!

The Aruba Tourism Authority recently had the great pleasure of recognizing Distinguished Visitor of Aruba. The honoree was respectively honored with a certificate acknowledging his years of visits, loyalty, and love for the island of Aruba.

The honor certification is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation and to say "Masha Danki" to guests who have visited Aruba 10, 20, or 35 years or more consecutively.

The three honoring levels are as follows:

Distinguished Visitor (10>years consecutively visiting Aruba)
Goodwill Ambassador (20>years consecutively visiting Aruba)
Emerald Ambassador (35>years consecutively visiting Aruba)

The honorees were:

Distinguished Visitor
Mr. Blake Berton from New Hampshire, United States.

Goodwill Ambassador

Ms. Linda Berton from New Hampshire, United States.

Emerald Ambassador

Mr. Ron Berton from New Hampshire, United States.

Mr. Jorgino Willems representing the Aruba Tourism Authority, and staff members of Renaissance Wind Creek Aruba Resort bestowed the certificate to the honorees, presented him with memorable gifts, and thanked him for choosing Aruba as his best-loved vacation destination, as his home away from home.

Top reasons for returning to Aruba provided by the honorees were:

- Aruba's wonderful tours.
- Aruba's safety.
- Aruba's friendly people.
- Aruba's weather.
- Aruba's Restaurants.
- Aruba's great shopping options.

On behalf of the Aruba Tourism Authority, we would like to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to the honorees for their continued visits to the "One Happy Island". □



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Aruba To You Celebrates Over 500 Deliveries and 3.000 Registrations in Just Two Months Since Launch

(Oranjestad)—Aruba To You, the newest player in the food delivery service industry in Aruba, proudly announces a major milestone in its brief history. Just two months after its launch on March 6, 2024, the company has not only successfully completed over 500 food delivery orders but also witnessed more than 3,000 customers registering on its platform, app.arubatoyou.com.

The service has quickly become a local favorite, offering convenient and reliable food delivery from a continually expanding list of diverse restaurants across the island. This achievement underscores Aruba To You's commitment to providing high-quality service and broadening culinary options for its customers.

"We are overwhelmed by the enthusias-



tic reception from both the community and our restaurant partners," said Gianluca Sardo, Co-founder of Aruba To You. "These milestones so early in our journey reflect the dedication of our team and the strong con-

nections we've built with local food establishments."

Aruba To You is more than just a food delivery service; it is a gateway connecting food lovers with the best that Aruba's culinary scene has to offer. The company is dedicated to enhancing its network and elevating the customer experience through innovative technology and personalized service.

As it continues to grow, Aruba To You aims to support more local businesses and cater to an ever-increasing audience, ensuring everyone can enjoy their favorite dishes no matter where they are on the island.

For more information about Aruba To You and to place your order today, visit app.arubatoyou.com or download the Aruba To You app on your mobile device. □

Visit the natural bridges of Aruba!

(Oranjestad)—After you've visited the Alto Vista Church, the Bushiribana Gold Mill Ruins and the mini natural pool that is located right next to it, you're next up around the northern coast line must be the Natural Bridge. Once the largest natural bridge in the Caribbean, this bridge has been a tourist attraction for many years.

The bridge was formed during thousands of years, cut and crafted by the wild waves that crash into the coral stone walls of the coast. Before its collapse, this bridge measured 30 me-



ters in length and 7 meters in height, making it the biggest natural bridge in the Caribbean at the time. For many years, this site was also a frequently visited beach, as the bridge had a small opening through which the water would flow into the tiny beach.

Unfortunately in 2005, the bridge collapsed, and the little beach dried up. Despite this, this site remained a tourist attraction, with many vis-

itors walking along the coral cliffs of the bridge to see the spectacular view of the northern coastline and the Caribbean Sea. Visitors can also still visit the souvenir shop on the left of the bridge entrance.

While the natural bridge no longer is functional, there is now a smaller natural bridge very close. This bridge is often called the "Baby Bridge" or "Daughter Bridge". □



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Expanding Aruba's street art collection

Local artists unveil mural art in main street Oranjestad

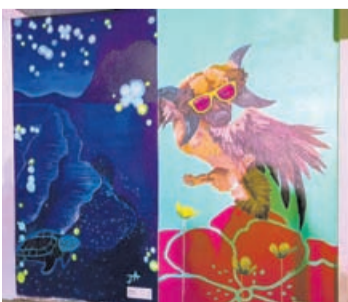
(Oranjestad)—Aruba's art scene is expanding in Oranjestad, welcoming the latest pieces to the mural art collection in the capital city. With a total of 15 new pieces, the main street in Oranjestad just got a little bit more colorful.

Thursday night was one of celebration for a few local artists at the Magnify Mural Expo organized by Aruba's Ateliers '89 Punto di Beyas Artes in main street Oranjestad. In a small gathering of friends, family and special guests, all 15 painters—who participated in the Making a Mural Workshop under the guidance of Armando Goedgedrag—unveiled their works of art, contributing to the street art collection that is becoming one of Aruba's signature attractions.

The workshop's mentor, Mr. Armando Goedgedrag, expressed in his emotional speech his gratitude to all his students, and above all to his own mentor, director and curator Elvis Lopez at Ateliers '89. Armando's dedication and passion did not go unappreciated either, as one his students took the opportunity to thank him for his guidance during the 4-week long workshop.

Armando mentioned that one of the techniques that his students were especially interested in was scaling—and his teachings obviously had its effect; each mural painting contained an impressive attention to detail, as shadow placement and special awareness seem to have translated flawlessly onto the mural canvas. The expo included various pieces, all seemingly following a similar theme; capturing the essence of the nature and animals of Aruba.

If you're ever in the main street area of Oranjestad, be sure to check out the latest edition of mural art behind the Big Bazaar Department Store. □



Dining in? Try making a local favorite How to make “funchi hasa”

(Oranjestad)—A night in can be just as fun as a night out on the town, especially if you got the right snacks to munch on. One of the most famous Aruban snacks or appetizers is “funchi hasa” (fried polenta sticks). A super easy meal that adults and children will both enjoy. Here’s how to make it!

Before we start, get to know the basics. So what is funchi hasa? Funchi, or Aruban polenta, is a popular side dish for local dishes, like soups, stews and fried fish. Made from a corn flour, water and butter mixture, this appetizer is traditionally eaten alongside a warm meal. However, locals also like to fry sticks of funchi for a quick and filling snack.

Ingredients (measured by heart)



1. Polenta flour*
2. Water
3. Butter
4. Salt to taste

Directions

Bring water to a boil in a medium-sized sauce pan. Add in some salt and butter to taste in the boiling water and let this dissolve and melt. Then, gradually add the flour while stirring with a wooden spoon. The mixture will start to begin to harden pretty fast, so be careful not to add too much. At this phase of cooking, you want a goopy thick mixture, but thin enough so you can continue to stir to get all the lumps out.

After reaching a semi-firm, yet flexible texture, grab a baking pan or any large, deep plate, and pour the mixture in. Be sure that this plate is wet or greased so that the mixture does not stick to the bottom. Let this cool complete-

ly while it firms up for the last time. Once it's cooled you can enjoy it as is, topped with some butter or shredded cheese. Or, you can take it to another level of deliciousness.

When your funchi is firm enough, cut it into strips (size is up to you). Heat up some oil in a pan and fry those babies up! After frying, you can top it with some cheese or enjoy it with your favorite dipping sauce.

Note: We recommend the FUNCHI FRESKU polenta flour brand that is sold in all supermarkets on the island. You can also use yellow corn flour from the brand PAN.

Photo credit of fried funchi sticks: Jacqueline Felida on Pinterest. □



Lessons from our elders:

Plants and fruits for medicinal use (part 2)

(Oranjestad)—In last week’s edition, we shared with our readers some medicinal use for plants and fruits, passed down from our elders through generations. This week, we present two more uses of fruits and plants for medicinal use.

Sweet potato

According to our elders, sweet potato is mostly useful for low blood pressure. People who suffer from low blood pressure were advised to eat sweet potato 2 to 3 times a week. However, if you have high blood pressure, it is best not to eat too much sweet potato, as this raises blood pressure. Sweet potatoes are also great for people who work hard labor jobs, and it’s been

said to be aid blood circulation in the body, as well as help those with hemorrhoids or diarrhea.

Many of our elders opted to plant sweet potatoes themselves, mostly because of how easy it was to do so. Cut the end of a sweet potato let it sit in shallow water until it starts to sprout. Then you may plant it in the ground. Sweet potatoes need plenty of water to grow, especially in the first week in the ground. It was said that once you start to notice the ground crack underneath the flowers, it is time to harvest. This should happen around month 3.



the seeds on the ground, they could grow into a tree.



Pomegranate

Pomegranates are also one of the easier fruits to plant and harvest. Originated from Persia, this plant can grow almost everywhere. In Aruba, there are many homes that have a tiny or big pomegranate tree. You may be wondering what the difference is between a small and big pomegranate tree, for which the answer is based on harvest time. Tiny trees produce tinier pomegranates that can be harvested early on. Contrarily, big trees produce bigger pomegranates, but they need enough time to fully ripen before harvesting, otherwise you might end up with bitter seeds. Pomegranate trees are also very easy to plant. In essence, if you just throw

In terms of medicinal use, pomegranate skins are said to have a few benefits for our health. According to customs, pomegranate skin tea can help those that suffer from diarrhea. Dried pomegranate skin tea is also good for people who have worms. Pomegranate flowers can be boiled to make a drink and this can be used for irritated gums; just take a swig and let the tea sit in your mouth for a couple minutes. □

Source: Remedi i Kustumber di nos Bieunan (Medicine and Customs of our Elderly) by Dinah Veeris

National Park Arikok: Aruba's biggest nature conservation

The National Park Arikok comprises almost 18 % of the island. Its rugged terrain, desert-like hills filled with tall cacti, breathtaking coastline and protected local flora and fauna welcome you to be explored. There are numerous animals to discover, for example the sea turtle who lays his eggs on the park's beaches.

The national park Arikok takes you on a memorable journey of the islands past offering unique geological, cultural and historical sites. These can all be enjoyed and explored either on your own or during guided tours. A wide variety of educational and informative programs and fun activities is available.

Did you know that four of the in total seven species of sea turtle lay their eggs on Aruba's beaches? In the national park, a Least Tern (*Sternula antillarum*) keeps a strict eye on a very special event taking place below on the beach: a majestic Leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*) heads back to sea after laying her eggs, while another nest laid 2 months ago by the same female hatches—a very rare occurrence of daytime nesting and hatching. Sea turtles prefer nesting in the cool and dark hours of the night. And hatchlings usually wait for the cue of cooling surface sand before emerging.

Nature Conservation

The protected area of National Park Arikok was officially established in 2000. Arikok National Park is a 34 square kilometers (7907 acres) of natural area, located at the north-eastern part of Aruba which contains examples of most of the island's flora and fauna against a backdrop of great geological complexity. We are proud to state that approximately 18% of the total land area of Aruba is assigned as a National Park, to protect and preserve the flora, fauna, geology and historical remains present within Arikok National Park.

The Landscape

There is a great geological variety within the park. The main aspects are the rough hills of the volcanic Aruba lava formation, the mysterious rocks of the batholithic quartz-diorite/tonalite, and the limestone rocks from fossilized coral. The two tallest hills on the island are situated within the park. Jamanota hill 188 meters (617 ft) and Arikok hill 176 meters (577 ft), from which the name of the park is derived.

The line of the permanently wind-and-wave beaten North Coast is broken by several bays



(boca's). Most of them are small yet impressive inlets at the mouth of dry riverbeds. Some of these bays (boca's) are spectacular sights, adorned with white, sandy beaches and sand dunes, as is the case at Boca Prins and Dos Playa.

Arikok is also home to Conchi, Aruba's most important natural attraction; also known as The Natural Pool. The journey to the Pool is and adventure by itself and only possible by foot, horse, ATV or 4x4 vehicle.

Cultural and Historical components

There are a number of sites within the park that attest to the history of Aruba. The Caquetío Indians left rock paintings in Cunucu Arikok and Fontein Cave. The bird drawing in the park logo is a copy of one of these historical artistic expressions.

Old plantation (Cunucus) sites tell the story of an active yet challenging agricultural past.

These Cunucus were also residential areas for the few families that worked the land. These families found ways to survive in the difficult conditions, and were able to erect their homes with materials found in the area. Two of these adobe houses have been restored. Park rang-

ers are learning many of the old building techniques in order to preserve this unique Aruban mud-house. At Cunucu Arikok and near Plantation Prins you can find these adobe houses.

Park Management

For the management of the park, a dedicated foundation "Fundacion Parke Nacional Arikok" (FPNA), known today as the Aruba National Park Foundation was established in July 2003. In February 2017, mangrove and wetland RAMSAR site #198 Spanish Lagoon was annexed to Arikok National Park due to its importance as a feeding and breeding area for water birds and as a nursery area for a variety of marine organisms. With this addition, the areas under FPNA management increased by 70 hectares while the amount of species of flora and fauna to be conserved to over 250. On December 21st, 2018 (AB 2018 no. 77) Parke Marino Aruba – currently consisting of four marine protected areas (MPAs) – was officially established and subsequently brought under management of FPNA. In 2019 management plans will be established for the new MPAs which include: coral reefs, sea grass beds, mangrove systems, a large diversity of breeding seabirds. Parke Marino Aruba also contains potential shark nursery areas, endangered sea turtle nesting beaches and marine mammal nursery areas. □



CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

- 1 Umbrella parts
- 5 Petty quarrels
- 10 Honshu port
- 12 Common eye color
- 13 Caesar's language
- 14 Plain silly
- 15 Ignited
- 16 Brief drop
- 18 Pet perch
- 19 Pink shade
- 21 Posted
- 22 Symbol of life
- 24 Intense fear
- 25 White-rooted biennial
- 29 Green fruit
- 30 England invader
- 32 Swiss peak
- 33 GI-entertaining grp.
- 34 Be a snoop
- 35 Posts
- 37 Racket
- 39 Be of one mind
- 40 Swagger

- 41 Garden starters
- 42 Thomas Hardy heroine

DOWN

- 1 Bakery buys
- 2 Old Testament prophet
- 3 Clash
- 4 Enjoy the slopes
- 5 Fleet unit
- 6 Piper of myth
- 7 Flowery shrub
- 8 Lease signer
- 9 Was out
- 11 Neighbor of Spain
- 17 Rounds makers
- 20 "Picnic" role
- 21 Passover meal
- 23 Simian subset
- 25 Cow chow
- 26 Strike caller
- 27 Kingdom
- 28 St. Paul's birth-place
- 29 Eastern monks
- 31 Moscow denials
- 33 Calls on
- 36 Was a pioneer
- 38 Mel of the Giants

C	A	S	T	E	M	A	R	T	S
A	R	M	E	D	A	L	O	H	A
M	O	O	N	S	U	T	U	R	N
E	M	O	E	N	R	A	G	E	D
R	A	T	L	I	E	H	A	Y	
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	S	E	C	N	I	L			
T	A	P	A	S		M	E	S	H
F	R	I	S	I	S	D	E	E	
L	I	L	L	I	A	N	D	A	D
A	V	I	A	N	I	C	I	N	G
P	I	N	T	O	D	A	N	C	E
S	A	G	E	S	E	D	G	E	S

Yesterday's answer

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9
10				11		12			
13						14			
15				16	17			18	
19			20				21		
	22					23			
			24						
	25	26					27	28	
29					30				31
32				33				34	
35			36			37	38		
39						40			
41							42		

5-4

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

5-4

CRYPTOQUOTE

XES QSRU WTOGJ UE DT RUHWW

HJ ULT QHPRU EA OKUHMHUX

OJP UE DT MHDGOJUWX OWHMT

HJ GTNERT. — HJPHGO FOJPLH

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: MOST OF THE TROUBLE IN THE WORLD IS CAUSED BY PEOPLE WANTING TO BE IMPORTANT. — T.S. ELIOT

Cruise ship Schedule: May 01 - May 28 2024

TUE	07	CARNIVAL MAGIC	09.00	22.00	C	1
TUE	14	ADVENTURE OF THE SEAS	08.00	21.00	B	1
		CARNIVAL HORIZON	08.00	22.00	C	1
WED	15	RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS	09.00	21.00	C	1
TUE	21	CELEBRITY BEYOND	08.00	21.00	B	1
		CARNIVAL VISTA	13.00	23.00	C	1
WED	22	CARNIVAL CELEBRATION	08.00	22.00	C	1
MON	27	ISLAND PRINCESS	09.00	22.00	C	1
TUE	28	CARNIVAL HORIZON	09.00	22.00	C	1

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basic—but important—information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.

lets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.

Supermarket hours



Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 9 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.

Electrical power



Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of out-

Drinking water



The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.

Safety



Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occurs, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

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24/7

Google, Justice Department make final arguments about whether search engine is a monopoly

By **MATTHEW BARAKAT**
AP Business Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Google's preeminence as an internet search engine is an illegal monopoly propped up by more than \$20 billion spent each year by the tech giant to lock out competition, Justice Department lawyers argued at the closings of a high-stakes antitrust lawsuit. Google, on the other hand, maintains that its ubiquity flows from its excellence, and its ability to deliver results customers are looking for.

The U.S. government, a coalition of states and Google all made their closing arguments Friday in the 10-week lawsuit to U.S. District Judge Amit Mehta, who must now decide whether Google broke the law in maintaining a monopoly status as a search engine.

Much of the case, the biggest antitrust trial in more than two decades, has revolved around how much Google derives its strength from contracts it has in place with companies like Apple to make Google the default search engine preloaded on cellphones and computers.

At trial, evidence showed that Google spends more than \$20 billion a year on such contracts. Justice Department lawyers have said the huge sum is indicative of how important it is for Google to make itself the default search engine and block competitors from getting a foothold.

Google responds that customers could easily click away to other search engines if they wanted, but that consumers invariably prefer Google. Companies like Apple testified at trial that they partner with Google because they consider its search engine to be superior.

Google also argues that the government defines the search engine market too narrowly. While it does hold a dominant position over other general search engines like Bing and Yahoo, Google says it faces



The San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge is seen behind a Google sign at the company's office in San Francisco, April 12, 2023. Associated Press

much more intense competition when consumers make targeted searches. For instance, the tech giant says shoppers may be more likely to search for products on Amazon than Google, vacation planners may run their searches on AirBnB, and hungry diners may be more likely to search for a restaurant on Yelp.

And Google has said that social media companies like Facebook and TikTok also present fierce competition.

During Friday's arguments, Mehta questioned whether some of those other companies are really in the same market. He said social media companies can generate ad revenue by trying to present ads that seem to match a consumer's interest. But he said Google has the ability to place ads in front of consumers in direct response to

queries they submit.

"It's only Google where we can see that directly declared intent," Mehta said. Google's lawyer, John Schmittlein, responded that social media companies "have lots and lots of information about your interests that I would say is just as powerful."

The company has also argued that its market strength is tenuous as the internet continually re-makes itself. Earlier in the trial, it noted that many experts once considered it irrefutable that Yahoo would always be dominant in search. Today, it said that younger tech consumers sometimes think of Google as "Grandpa Google." While Google's search services are free to consumers, the company generates revenue from searches by selling ads that accompany a user's search results.

Justice Department attorney David Dahlquist said during Friday's arguments that Google was able to increase its ad revenue through growth in the number of queries submitted until about 2015 when query growth slowed and they needed to make more money on each search. The government argues that Google's search engine monopoly allows it to charge artificially higher prices to advertisers, which eventually carry over to consumers. □

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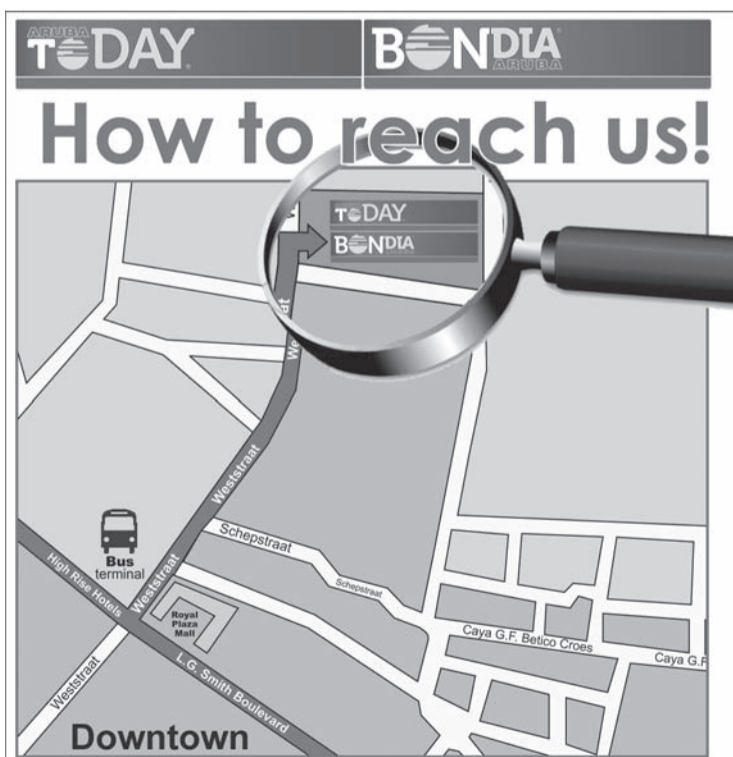
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Bold, audacious 'I Saw the TV Glow' explores fandom, identity and the way we remember

By JOCELYN NOVECK
AP National Writer

The school gym. The football field bleachers. The multiplex, the fast food drive-thru, the quiet leaf-covered street where your friend lives.

Something about the detail and clarity with which Jane Schoenbrun evokes '90s suburbia in "I Saw the TV Glow" makes you remember growing up there — even if you didn't.

But that's the thing about memory, isn't it? It can be distorting.

And that's what Schoenbrun, an exciting filmmaker on only their second project, is driving home in this tale centered on those angsty school years when you're trying to fit in, or merely realizing you don't — particularly, and more intensely, if you are queer or trans and don't quite know it yet.

Schoenbrun has spoken about their own suburban youth in the '90s, feeling different but not fully understanding why until years later when they began their own transition. The backstory of Schoenbrun's own experience is not essential to appreciating their movie, but certainly adds poignancy to some scenes — especially one in which the main character, Owen (Justice Smith, superb), describes the confusion he's been feeling about himself. Something is wrong



This image released by A24 shows Justice Smith, left, and Brigitte Lundy-Paine in a scene from "I Saw the TV Glow."

Associated Press

with him, he knows, even though his parents won't say it. He feels like someone has dug out his insides.

Similarly, one need not be an aficionado of '90s cable TV — particularly "Buffy the Vampire Slayer," which Schoenbrun grew up loving — to understand the huge role that fandom plays in the emotional life of Owen and his new friend, Maddy (Brigitte Lundy-Paine). If you were a big fan of any show that aired before the streaming era, you'll understand instinctively how that intense connection can lead to distorted memories: Watch it today, and what felt scary is now silly. What seemed like art is a cheesy mess.

But we remember what we remember for a reason, Schoenbrun is saying, in a film that succeeds most clearly on an emotional level, if the plot eventually

feels a bit muddled. (But is that purposeful, another meditation on the selectiveness of memory, or a reflection of the jumbled way we think in youth? Yes, in all likelihood.)

We first meet middle-school aged Owen (a wonderfully empathetic Ian Foreman plays this younger version) on Election Day 1996. Owen's mom (Danielle Deadwyler) takes him into the voting booth at the high school. But Owen's interested in something else: older student Maddy, who exudes a Goth toughness, reading a book of episodes of "The Pink Opaque," a horror-esque series on cable. Owen has seen the ads, but the show airs past his bedtime: at 10:30 on Saturday nights, just before the Young Adult Network switches to reruns.

Maddy's in 9th grade; the two-year gap feels enor-

mous. But she is eager to bond over the show. The next Saturday Owen asks his mother if he can sleep at a male friend's house, but makes his way instead to Maddy's basement. Thus begins a deep connection to the show which follows two girls who meet at sleep-away camp and learn they connect on an ancient psychic plane. They unite to destroy a new monster each week, monsters ruled by an evil Man in the Moon named Mr. Melancholy.

Mr. Melancholy wants to trap Isabel (Helena Howard) and Tara (Lindsey Jordan, aka the musician Snail Mail) in the Midnight Realm, and that one factoid leads to some comic relief: "This isn't the Midnight Realm," Owen exclaims to Maddy at one point. "It's just the suburbs!"

But we're getting ahead of ourselves. Two years go by and Maddy has been leaving Owen VHS tapes of "The Pink Opaque" in the school darkroom, annotated with observations. But he still hasn't been able to see it at 10:30 on a Saturday. Asks his stern father: "Isn't that a show for girls?" His parents decline his request to stay up late. (Dad, by the way, is played by Fred Durst of Limp Bizkit; also appearing in a cameo is Phoebe Bridgers.)

So Owen (Smith, in a lovely and nuanced performance) plans another

stealth sleepover. They watch together, and Maddy weeps. She then tells Owen she is leaving town. He is torn about whether to join her. Years go by, and eventually "The Pink Opaque" is canceled.

Remember when you could touch and collect tapes, albums, that sort of thing? Somehow that seemed more of a concrete relationship with the culture we consume than the equivalent today. You don't have to worry nowadays about remembering a show wrong: you can always find it somewhere. But you don't feel you "own" it anymore than you "own" a song on Spotify.

Schoenbrun acknowledges this when they show an adult Owen later re-watching his beloved show on streaming and realizing, with sadness and even embarrassment, that nothing's what it seemed.

But the show's significance has much deeper meaning. We all love a good escape-to-another-world tale — it's something we treasure from childhood. But here, in '90s suburbia, the TV screen becomes a portal not only into an escapist world but also, on another level, to the opposite: a new reality that is not fake at all, a world in which Owen can be himself. The self he may not yet really know. □

Fox News' Bill Hemmer heads north — way north — for look at U.S. military preparedness

NEW YORK (AP) — Fox News anchor Bill Hemmer needed a chain saw to complete one of his latest assignments.

Hemmer traveled north for "Battle for the Arctic," a documentary on the Fox Nation streaming service about the U.S. Navy's preparedness in the region, where he took a brief ride on a nuclear submarine. The sub surfaced on a giant ice floe northeast of Alaska where the Navy had a

camp. It took more than an hour for a chain saw to cut through the ice and enable Hemmer to walk down the hatch for his visit.

"It's not quite impenetrable," Hemmer said. "But it's close."

Hemmer noted that eight nations have land within the Arctic Circle, seven of them members of NATO. The exception is Russia, and the U.S. military is watching closely — the purpose of his trip.



This image provided by FOX News Media shows an anchor Bill Hemmer shooting a scene from "Battle for the Arctic with Bill Hemmer."

Associated Press

His special, currently streaming, doubles as a travelogue into an endless expanse of white.

"Everything you see is something that you have never seen before in your life because so few people have been here," he said. "It's a remarkable site."

Mindful of loyal Fox fans, Hemmer skirts one issue — climate change. "Why Arctic ice is receding, how fast and what it means," he said. □

After top betting choices Fierceness and Sierra Leone, it's wide open for the 150th Kentucky Derby

By BETH HARRIS
AP Racing Writer

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (AP) — Fate has not been kind to Mike Repole in the Kentucky Derby. The outspoken owner is 0 for 7, although he is perhaps best known for his two champions that never made the starting gate. In 2011, Uncle Mo was scratched the day before the race because of a gastrointestinal infection. Last year, Forte was scratched the morning of the race due to a bruised right front foot.

Now, the self-made billionaire from Queens, New York, is back with Fierceness, the morning-line favorite for Saturday's 150th Derby. The bay colt was last year's 2-year-old champion and is coming off a 13 1/2-length win in the Florida Derby.

Fierceness will have to overcome a bit of Derby history: No horse has ever won out of the No. 17 post.

"The horse is just a different kind. He does everything so easy, so calm, so cool," said Repole, known for his high energy and using his account on X as an incu-



Kentucky Derby hopeful Fierceness works out at Churchill Downs Wednesday, May 1, 2024, in Louisville, Ky.

Associated Press

bator for racing reform and challenging critics. "A horse like this calms me down."

A sharp-dressed crowd of about 150,000 is expected to jam Churchill Downs to wager and watch the 1 1/4-mile Derby. Post time is 6:57 p.m. EDT. The forecast calls for 79 degrees (26 Celsius) and a 40% chance of showers.

Fierceness is trained by Todd Pletcher and ridden by John Velazquez, who have won a combined five derbies.

"I hope it doesn't take as long as it took the Cubs to

win the World Series," Repole said of his efforts to bag one.

Like Repole, trainer Chad Brown is 0 for 7. He will saddle early 3-1 second choice Sierra Leone, who is known as a closer, and long shot Domestic Product. Sierra Leone is the priciest horse in the field, having cost \$2.3 million.

Besides Brown, trainers Brad Cox and Danny Gargan have two entries apiece.

Louisville-born Cox won his first Derby belatedly when Mandaloun was elevated to first place after Medina

Spirit's disqualification nine months after the 2021 race. Now he has early 8-1 third choice Catching Freedom and 10-1 co-fourth choice Just a Touch, who didn't race at age 2 like his sire, 2018 Triple Crown winner Justify.

Gargan's long-shot duo is Dornach and Society Man. Front-running Dornach breaks from the No. 1 post for co-owner and retired Philadelphia Phillies star Jayson Werth.

"Hopefully he'll break running and we'll put him on the front end and see how it goes," Gargan said. "We planned on keeping his face clean. Now we'll keep it real clean."

Society Man is ridden by Frankie Dettori, who is back in the Derby at age 53 after 24 years.

Larry Demeritte is just the second Black trainer since 1951 to take a shot at winning the Derby. The 74-year-old who has fought cancer for several years will saddle the star of his 11-horse stable, West Saratoga, a colt that cost \$11,000.

"My motto is, 'I don't buy cheap horses, I buy good

horses cheap,'" he said.

Japan is represented by early 10-1 shot Forever Young (winner of five straight starts) and 30-1 shot T O Password. No horse from that country has ever won the Derby.

A year ago, two horses died on Derby day at Churchill Downs, where a total of 12 horses died in the weeks surrounding the race. The historic track has deepened its dirt racing surface and added to its safety protocols in an effort to prevent more tragedy. Last May, Churchill Downs suspended trainer Saffie Joseph Jr. after two of his horses died and it scratched his Derby horse, Lord Miles. He is back this week with Catalytic.

Six-time Derby winner Bob Baffert is not. The trainer had his two-year suspension for Medina Spirit's failed drug test in 2021 extended to a third year by Churchill Downs despite not having any further medication violations.

Four-time winner D. Wayne Lukas saddled long shot Just Steel, ridden by Keith Asmussen, the son of trainer Steve Asmussen. □

Rublev beats Fritz to reach Madrid Open final against Auger-Aliassime

MADRID (AP) — Andrey Rublev beat Taylor Fritz 6-4, 6-3 on Friday to reach the Madrid Open final where he will meet Felix Auger-Aliassime.

Auger-Aliassime advanced after Jiri Lehecka had to retire at 3-3 in the first set of their semifinal.

The men's final for the clay-court event is on Sunday.

The eighth-ranked Rublev entered Madrid on a four-game losing streak after early exits in Indian Wells, Miami, Monte Carlo and Barcelona. He has won four straight in Spain's capital, including against two-time defending champion Carlos Alcaraz in the quarterfinals.

"It's crazy," Rublev said. "It's the good thing about sports, about tennis. One

week can change everything, you have to remember that ... because you can't perform always at 100%, so it is normal there will be ups and downs."

Rublev is seeking his 16th career title and his second of the season after winning Hong Kong in January.

Lehecka wept — and smashed his racket on the ground — when he called it quits due to an apparent injury. Auger-Aliassime hugged him at the net to show his support for the 31st-ranked Czech, who knocked out Rafael Nadal on Wednesday.

Auger-Aliassime had a walkover in the quarterfinals when top-seeded Jan-nik Sinner said he couldn't play due to a hip injury. The 35th-ranked Canadian,



Andrey Rublev, of Russia, returns the ball to Taylor Fritz, of United States, during the Mutua Madrid Open tennis tournament in Madrid, Spain, Friday, May 3, 2024.

Associated Press

who beat Casper Ruud this week, will be seeking his sixth career title.

The men's side has been hard hit by injuries and fitness concerns.

Novak Djokovic withdrew before the tournament. In addition to Sinner and Le-

hecka, Daniil Medvedev retired from his quarterfinal with Lehecka; Alcaraz was hampered by a sore right arm before he fell to Rublev; and Nadal did what he could before bowing out of what was likely his last appearance in his

home country.

Fritz, ranked 13th, entered the match with a 5-3 record against Rublev. He was also seeking his second title of the season, and eighth of his career. He won Delray Beach in February.

After an evenly contested start, Rublev pounced by breaking Fritz from love on his last service game of the first set. He remained in control. Fritz hit seven aces — to Rublev's five — but landed only 55% of his first serves. Rublev landed 75% of his first serves and struck 20 winners to Fritz's 16.

"Mentally I was feeling much better and I was able to perform," Rublev said. "Putting emotions in the right direction. For sure it has helped me to reach the final." □

The Lakers fire coach Darvin Ham after just 2 seasons in charge and 1st-round playoff exit

By **GREG BEACHAM**
AP Sports Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The Los Angeles Lakers fired coach Darvin Ham on Friday after just two seasons in charge.

The Lakers announced on social media that they were dismissing Ham four days after their season ended with a first-round playoff loss to Denver in five games. Ham led Los Angeles to the Western Conference finals less than a year ago in his first season as an NBA head coach. He had replaced Frank Vogel, who was fired by the Lakers exactly 18 months after winning the franchise's 17th championship in 2020.

Ham had two winning seasons and made two playoff appearances, but that's not enough with the championship-focused Lakers. With little time left to capitalize on the concurrent presence of Anthony Davis and 39-year-old LeBron James — who hasn't decided whether to return for his 22nd NBA season — the Lakers are resetting their coaching staff once again instead of blaming general manager Rob Pelinka for his roster construction.

"We greatly appreciate Darvin's efforts on behalf of the Lakers and recognize the many accomplishments achieved over the past two seasons, including last year's remarkable run to the Western Conference finals," Pelinka said in a statement. "We all want to



Los Angeles Lakers head coach Darvin Ham, left, argues for a call with referee Kevin Scott, front right, in the first half of Game 5 of an NBA basketball first-round playoff series against the Denver Nuggets, Monday, April 29, 2024, in Denver.

Associated Press

thank Darvin for his dedication and positivity. While this was a difficult decision to make, it is the best course of action following a full review of the season. This organization will remain unwavering in its commitment to deliver championship-caliber basketball to Lakers fans around the world."

Ham presided over a disappointing year for the Lakers, who went 47-35 in the regular season and won the NBA's inaugural In-Season Tournament. The Lakers then beat New Orleans in a play-in game to

move up to the seventh seed in the highly competitive Western Conference — but that meant they had to face Denver, which swept them out of the playoffs last season.

Los Angeles led the defending champion Nuggets for long stretches of their first-round series, but Nikola Jokic and his teammates eventually rolled into the second round with a series of comeback wins. "Sitting in this seat, it's been a hell of a two years," Ham said after the game. "A lot of good things that got

done, but ultimately, you want to win that ultimate prize."

The Lakers' failure stung because James and Davis were largely healthy all year long, with both superstars playing more games than they had managed in an NBA season since 2017-18 — 76 for Davis and 71 for James, the leading scorer in NBA history. D'Angelo Russell also had a strong regular season, setting the franchise record for 3-pointers.

That health and success only translated into a four-

win improvement in the standings from last season, and Ham received much of the blame from fans and observers for his game management, slow tactical adjustments and a reluctance to change his player rotations and starting lineups, even when things weren't working.

The Lakers fell into a hole they couldn't escape when they went 3-10 during the holiday period immediately after the In-Season Tournament finale. Ham was widely criticized for his lineups and rotations during that poor stretch — among other decisions, he curiously benched Russell and Austin Reaves while giving extensive playing time to Taurean Prince and Cam Reddish.

That slump eventually prevented the Lakers from landing a top-6 seed in the West even though they finished the regular season on an impressive 28-14 surge.

The players publicly backed Ham, but signs of frustration were clear. After the Lakers blew a 20-point lead and lost to Denver in Game 2 last month, Davis said the Lakers "have stretches where we don't know what we're doing on both ends of the floor," a comment widely interpreted as a shot at Ham's coaching competence.

The Lakers only went 43-39 in their first season under Ham in 2022-23, but they capitalized on more favorable playoff matchups. □

Fever move Caitlin Clark's preseason home debut up 1 day to accommodate Pacers' playoff schedule

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Caitlin Clark will make her preseason home debut one day earlier than initially scheduled, Indiana Fever officials announced Friday. Indiana was initially scheduled to host the Atlanta Dream on May 10. The game will now be played on Thursday.

The scheduling conflict occurred when the Indiana Pacers and New York

Knicks each advanced to the Eastern Conference semifinals of the NBA playoffs with Game 6 wins Thursday night. League officials then announced the two teams would play Game 3 at Indiana on May 10 at 7 p.m. — the same date and time the Fever and Dream were to play.

Both Indiana teams play in the same building, Gainbridge Fieldhouse.



Indiana Fever guard Caitlin Clark brings the ball upcourt as the WNBA basketball team practices in Indianapolis, Sunday, April 28, 2024.

Associated Press

Fever officials said tickets with the May 10 date will be valid for the rescheduled game and that the game will be shown on the WNBA app.

Clark's first professional game will be played Friday night at Dallas. Indiana opens the regular season May 14 at Connecticut and plays its first home game May 16 against New York. □